



# THE AMERICAN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

## 60 YEARS OF SERVICE IN SOUTH INDIA

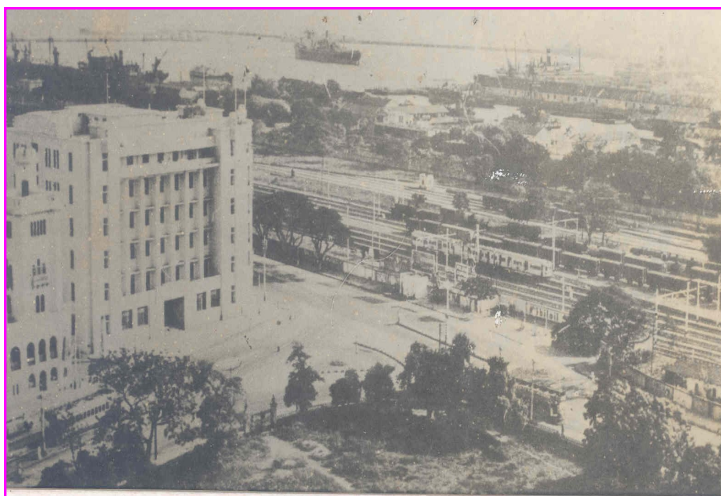
### From the Publisher

Dear friend:

Greetings from the American Library!

The American Library in Chennai is celebrating 60 years of service in south India. This journey has been highly successful because of the excellent patronage and cooperation of the people of south India. We are extremely happy that we had the opportunity to serve millions of people from all walks of life including high level government officials, judges, politicians, educators, academics, journalists, business executives, and students. Our aim has been to provide more than just information about the United States. Our goal has been to help expand knowledge and horizons in south India and help our patrons academically and professionally. It is my sincere hope that we have met this goal!

The Library began in 1947 as part of the U.S. Consulate at Dare House with a collection of just 800 books. Later, the Library along with the United States Information Service



In 1940, Parrys opened its new headquarters, named Dare House, the landmark that still stands at Parrys Corner. The U.S. Consulate rented space on the fourth story of the new building. This photograph was taken shortly after the opening.

(USIS) moved to the Vummudiar building on 162, Mount Road, with a small reading room with attached library. In 1951 the Library was again shifted to the Addison Building on Mount Road. Libraries in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Guntur were organized under USIS Madras in the 1950s



CURRENT BUILDING – OPENED IN 1969

and after the closure of all the regional libraries in 1969, the Chennai American Library started serving patrons throughout South India. The current American Consulate General building opened on January 3, 1969, and became the permanent home for the Library. At the time he formally opened the new building, Ambassador Chester Bowles, called it the “highest point in the deep friendship and close relations between India and the U.S.”

As it celebrates its 60 years of service, the American Library, Chennai has reached another milestone in serving its south Indian patrons. We are proud that we have had the opportunity to serve our members for the last six decades and look forward to many more years of service. To this day, we feel that the American Library is a major reference and research facility which has been providing increased access to resources over the years for the benefit of the people in south India.

Over the last six decades, the Library has progressively grown, enhancing its resources and supporting American studies disciplines. Currently the Library has more than 15,000 books, subscribes to 140 print versions of scholarly journals and magazines, provides access to a number of advanced electronic databases, and hosts a collection of official U.S. Government publications, think tank reports, newspapers, and movies. The CDROM and online databases range from bibliographic to full text sources, giving access to more than



30,000 journals. The collection is particularly strong in the areas of American studies, American literature, management, law, international relations, environmental studies, and English as a second language. With introduction of information technology, the Library today offers state-of-the-art technology for information handling and retrieval. However, the basic mission and aim of the Library continues to be "Provide the right information to the right person at the right time."

Over the last decade, the Library has introduced the new concept of taking materials to people by organizing Road Shows/Traveling Exhibitions in several South Indian cities. Through these we have been able to reach out to a large number of people and create awareness about the information resources available at the Library. We would be glad to organize such programs in cities of interest should we hear from our patrons.

In September 2004, The American Library established an American Corner in Bangalore in partnership with the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan. This elegantly designed cozy corner has been serving as a hip place for upscale Bangaloreans in search of information about the United States. With its modest collection of books, audio and video programs and access to the Internet, the Corner is providing instant access to accurate information about the United States, its people, society, culture, history, politics and government. The Corner acts as a link between the people of Bangalore and the American Library in Chennai.

The most recent and highly successful event for the Library was its participation in the Chennai Book Fair in January 2008. The response was overwhelming. Of the 700,000 book-lovers from all over south India who attended the Book Fair, over 8,000 people visited the American Library stall and 438 signed up for new Library memberships. Library staff created a colorful ambience with samples of books and other resources it has to offer. Library staff were also available to answer questions and many seemed to agree with the statement: "Why buy when you can borrow from the Library."

Through its highly skilled professional librarians and with access to wide ranging resources, the Library has been providing high quality services to patrons over the past 60 years. We look forward to providing the same or even better service in the future. We believe that our Library will continue to play a vital role meeting the informational needs of our patrons. Providing information and satisfying patrons is challenging and we look forward to meeting this challenge in the decades to come.

Please keep in touch! Over the next few months, the Library will continue to host a number of special events celebrating our 60 years of service. Please accept my personal invitation to join us.



Wesley Robertson  
Information Officer

## PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY



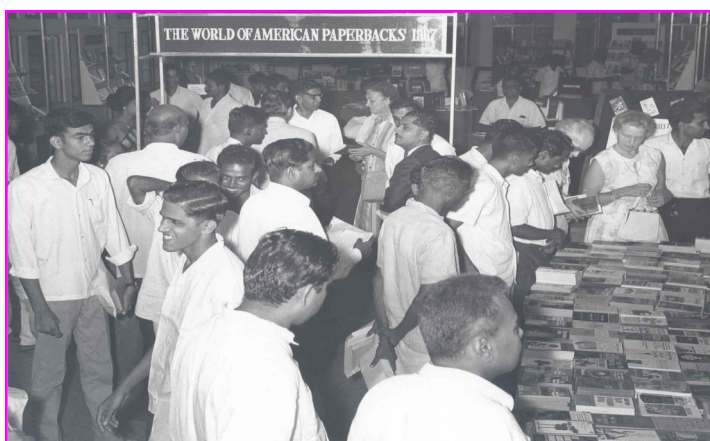
CIRCULATION DESK—1950'S



READING ROOM IN THE 50'S MOUNT ROAD

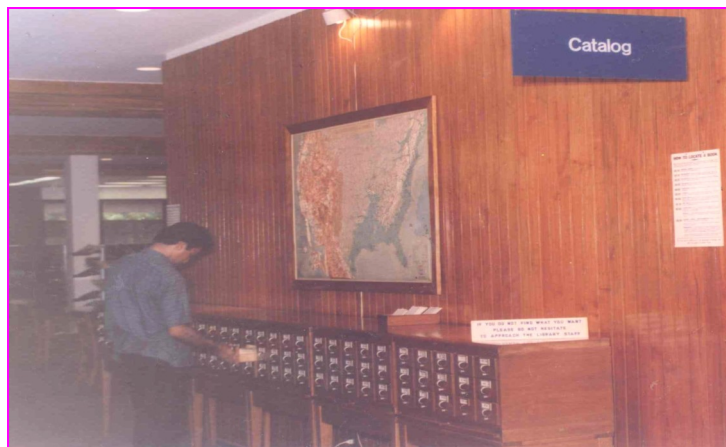


BOOK EXHIBITION -1960's



BOOK EXHIBITION-1960's





CARD CATALOG - 1980'S



CIRCULATION DESK-2002



REFERENCE SECTION -1990's



AMERICAN CORNER AT BANGALORE-2007



ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOG (OPAC)-1990'S



ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT THE AMERICAN LIBRARY-2007



MULTIMEDIA CORNER-1990'S



LIBRARY ROAD SHOW-2007





**LIBRARY ORIENTATION -2007  
STUDENTS USING ONLINE DATABASE-2007  
LIBRARY ORIENTATION-2008**



**WRITER PAUL THEROUX AT THE AMERICAN LIBRARY-2008**



**CIRCULATION DESK-2008**



**ROAD SHOW INAUGURATION-2008**



**AMERICAN LIBRARY PARTICIPATION IN THE CHENNAI BOOK FAIR-2008**



**HAPPY 60TH AN- NIVERSARY  
AMERICAN LIBRARY - CHENNAI**

We hope you enjoyed this brief pictorial history of the American Library Chennai. Many thanks to our patrons who have supported us through the years!